

100

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and  
Art Pictorial

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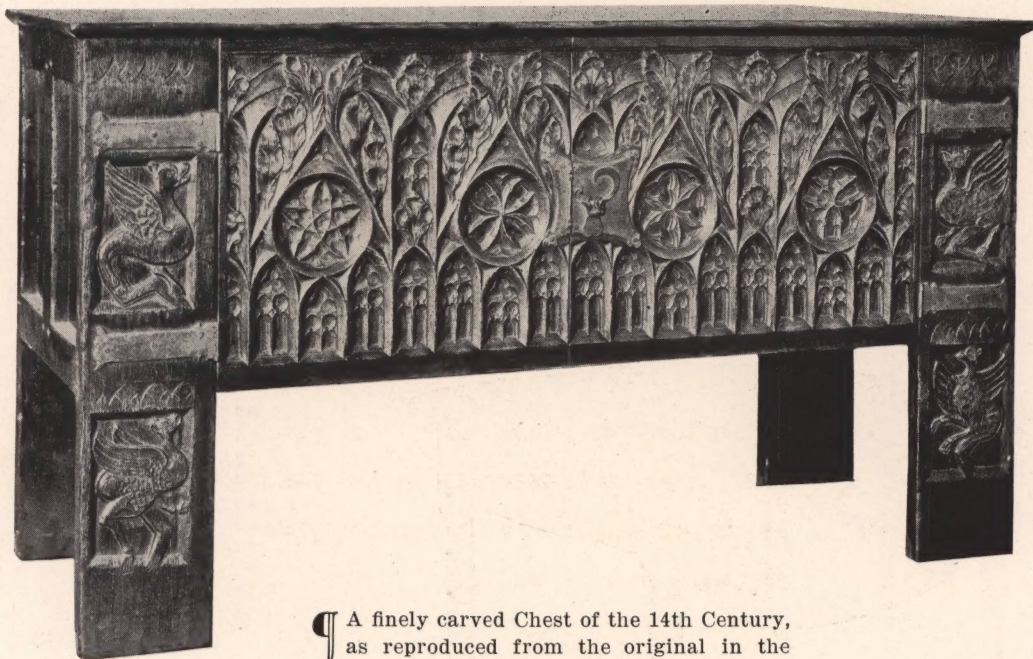
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The Sketch Book Magazine presents impartially each month the finest examples of architecture and art that have been created in the past or are coming from the hands of acknowledged masters today. By means of photographs, etchings, sketches and authentic letterpress the Sketch Book Magazine seeks to catch the spirit of these great forms of artistic expression and reflects it to those whose appreciation extends beyond the limits of customary magazine contents.

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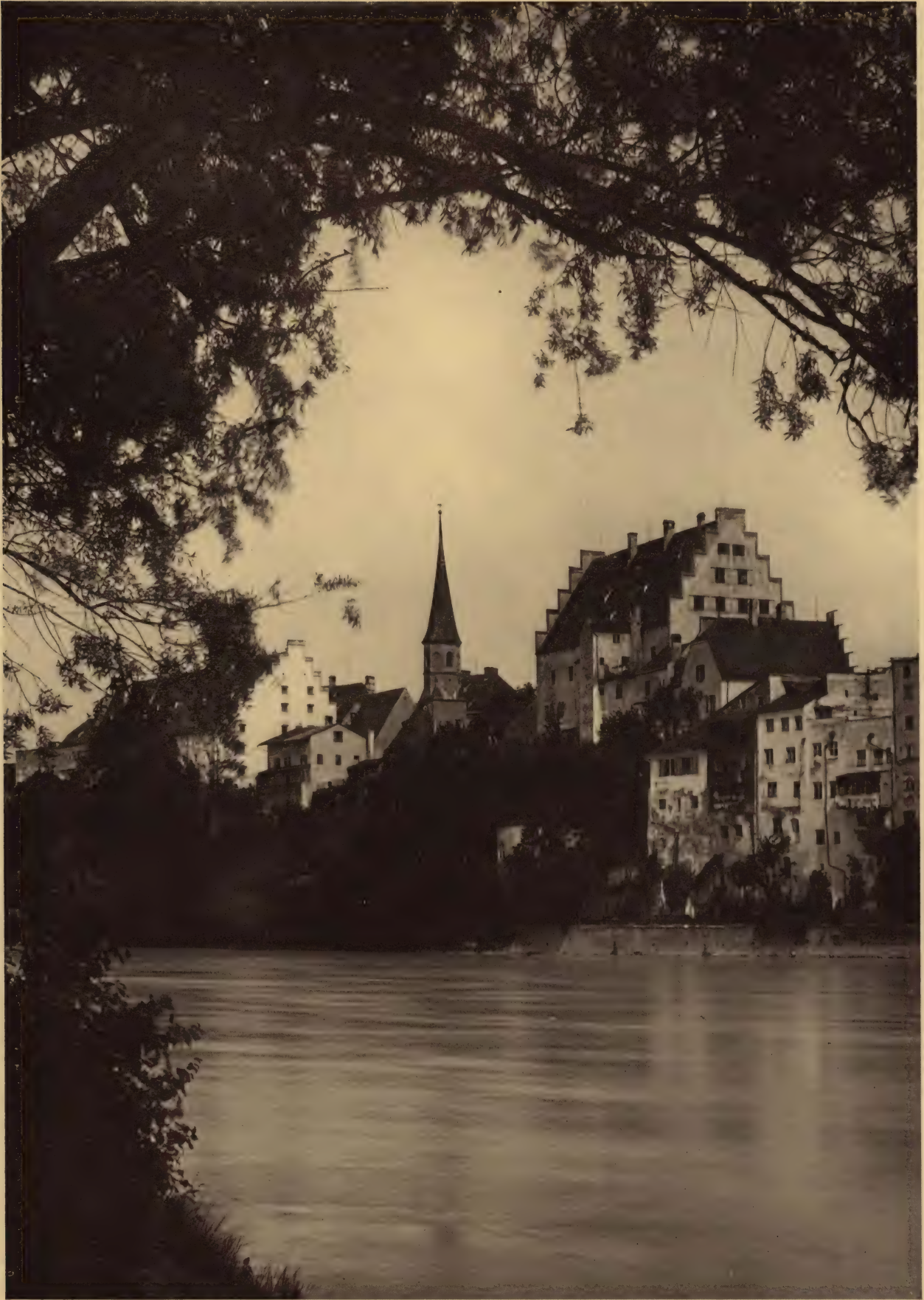
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*In the snug embrace of the river which once protected it from enemies and now protects it from "development", Wasserburg on the Inn has dreamed for centuries—a bit of the Middle Ages kept alive*





*It is one of the charms of musical life in Germany that it is not concentrated, as in most other countries, in one center. Almost every city of political or economic importance has an opera of quality. That of Dresden, Saxony's beautiful capital, was once considered "the most German of all German operas". The première of Strauss' "Egyptian Helena" last year was one of the achievements of the Dresden opera's new period of fame*

## The German Operatic Stage

□ □ □ □ □

ONLY two countries in the world can be regarded as real "operatic countries." These are Germany and Italy. In both these lands grand opera is a prominent factor in the life of the peoples.

The great number and nature of operas in Germany are a direct result of the historic development of the country. Germany had before the year 1918, thirty-six monarchs, and every one of these had its own court theatre. Many of them sacrificed much for the sake of their theatre, especially where the opera was concerned. Not a few of these former court and residential theatres have had to fight a bitter struggle since the Revolution and have lost much of their former importance; but not one of them was permitted to close its portals forever. Indeed, in some cases beautiful new opera houses have come into existence in such residential towns as much as ten years after the Revolution, as for example, in Neu-Strelitz, an idyllic town of 15,000 inhabitants, which boasts a theatre of not very great proportions but equipped to meet every theatrical possibility. In the main, tradition plays an important part in the German operatic world. This goes to explain the fact that although Leipzig is

commercially vastly more important than Dresden, the former residence of Saxony's potentates, the latter's theatre is much more famed than the civic opera in Leipzig. Even today it is possible to make a distinction between the former court theatres, which still possess a special glamor, and the municipal theatres, which, however, endeavor to offset this by presenting new works.

The Dresden Opera is extraordinarily rich in traditions. It is almost as old and almost as famous as that of Vienna. For two centuries Italians played the main roles there, precisely as was the case in Vienna, among them Johann Adolf Hasse, a German, but a completely Italianized German. Then Carl Maria von Weber came, and Dresden became the most German of all German operas, although Weber was not able to produce there either his "Freischütz" or his "Euryanthe." Some two decades after Weber came Wagner, and the first performances of "Rienzi," "The Flying Dutchman" and "Tannhauser" took place in Dresden.

Quieter years followed, but Dresden's fame in the pre-war period was again established by Ernst Schuch, who brought together a great ensemble of fine voices, and conducted not only Italian opera



brilliantly, but also, from "Salome" on, secured the first performance of almost every one of Richard Strauss' operas. Fritz Busch, the present conductor, maintains this high standard. It will be recalled that Dresden also had the privilege of presenting Strauss' "Egyptian Helena" for the first time.

Among the South German Operas, Stuttgart, unlike Dresden, takes no part in "festival performances." The city possesses two opera houses, situated close together, under the musical direction of Carl Leonhard. At the time they were built, shortly before the war, these houses were the most modern and beautiful ones in Germany, and they are still and will always be the most beautifully situated, surrounded as they are by water, old trees and hedges of roses and lilacs. The Stuttgart Opera enjoyed its greatest fame under Max von Schillings, before this artistically gifted conductor went to Berlin.

Carlsruhe gives its festival plays in Baden-Baden, which is also famous for other festival musical performances. In 1921 the Prince of Furstenberg, who has a further claim to distinction for the excellent beer brewed by him, brought into existence chamber music festivals in the tiny Black Forest city of Donaueschingen. These were devoted exclusively to the works of new composers, who had never before gained a hearing. The only requirement was that they must have something worthwhile and dignified to offer. Paul Hindemith, the most widely gifted among the modern German composers, was from the beginning and still is the soul of these festivals.

In 1927 they were transferred to the elegant old spa, Baden-Baden. In that and the following year the programs were mainly devoted to new operas, light, grotesque, and mainly one-act works. The Carlsruhe Opera will give Mozart festival plays in the Kurhaus at Baden-Baden in May, and in July the artistic possibilities of the radio will be tried out.

Bayreuth is exclusively a "festival play" city. In this city, the ancient seat of margraves, with a splendid baroque theatre, Richard Wagner laid in 1872 the cornerstone for his "festival playhouse," in which the "Ring of the Nibelungs" was heard for the first time in 1876 and "Parsifal" in 1882. A "provisional" framework building still stands as it did then, but with stage and technical equipments improved to meet modern demands, and is the Mecca for Wagnerians all over the world. Siegfried Wagner, the son of the master, attends to the settings. Among the conductors, Carl Muck, above all, still maintains the genuine Wagnerian traditions. For the special performances, lasting only a few weeks and which brought last season only the "Ring," "Tristan and Isolde" and

"Parsifal," a special ensemble of soloists, a special orchestra and a special chorus are assembled.

Bayreuth's fame moved another noted festival play city to action. This was Munich. In 1901 Ernst Possart, a great comedian and an ambitious theatrical director, added the Prince Regent Theatre to the two houses already existing, the Court Theatre and the Residenz Theatre. It was then and still is the only theatre in Germany outside of Bayreuth that is able to meet all demands made by Wagner's operas, including concealed orchestra.

That Munich thus became a competitor of Bayreuth was justified by two things. Munich, too, is an old Wagner city, in even greater degree than Dresden. It will be remembered how, in 1864, Ludwig II, the romantic "theatre king," came to Wagner's aid at the moment of the composer's most desperate situation and summoned him to Munich. The old court Theatre there saw in 1865 the first performance of "Tristan" and in 1868 of the "Meistersinger," and the first performances of the separate parts of the "Ring" were also given here, greatly against Wagner's will. But the Bavarian capital possesses also a much older and more famous theatre. This is the Residenz Theatre, more than 150 years old—a masterpiece of rococo interior decoration, constructed and ornamented by Francois Cuvillies. In 1781 Mozart conducted his "Idomeneo" here, and long before Ernst Possart had thought of his Wagner festival plays Hermann Levi had made of the Residenz the world's most beautiful Mozart theatre. He presented in succession "Figaro," "Don Giovanni," "The Abduction from The Seraglio" and "Cosi fan tutte" in new settings. In particular he really rediscovered "Cosi fan tutte" in its original form.

All these works are still played and still present their ancient charm. Mozart and Wagner are the two patron saints of the Munich festival plays. These plays reached their highest point under Felix Mottl and Bruno Walter. Under the present direction of Hans Knappertsbusch everything has been scenically renewed, and Wagner at least is given under him with the former excellence. The repertoire is much greater than in Bayreuth. There will be presented, from July 23rd to August 31st, the entire "Ring," "Tristan," "Meistersinger," "Parsifal," "Lohengrin," and "The Flying Dutchman," the latter in a new setting. The Mozart operas to be given include the later works from the "Abduction" to the "Magic Flute."

Grand opera in Germany is today nowhere a private venture or an undertaking by a group of interested individuals, but something which concerns the general public and is a means of educating that public in musical culture. The municipality and state, public organizations and co-operative societies, exhibit a lively interest in the welfare



of their opera to the extent of making good the annual deficit, which can assume imposing dimensions.

A whole volume could be written about the German operatic stages in general and German operas. There is Zoppot, near Danzig, which presents every year a sort of open-air Bayreuth and plays Wagner's works with stage settings furnished by a forest. There is the association of creative German musicians, the "Allgemeiner deutscher Musikverein," which will in the coming summer give in the Rhenish city of Duisburg a festival week devoted exclusively to new and hitherto unknown operas. Among the Prussian state operas are Wiesbaden and Cassel. Wiesbaden in particular stands on a high artistic level and frequently offers the guests at this spa special new works of merit, for its intendant, Paul Bekker, is one of the greatest protagonists of the so-called "new music."

Among the municipal operas one finds Hamburg,

whose specialty has been from earlier days the production of the newer Italian works, and Frankfort-on-Main, which in the last years has made way for Leipzig as a producer of new operas and has also lost to Leipzig Gustav Brecher, its former conductor. Along the Rhine one goes from Darmstadt to the famed State Theatre of Mannheim, which will this year celebrate its 150th anniversary. There are Cologne and the many opera houses on the Lower Rhine, especially Duesseldorf, the modern garden city, all of which devote themselves alike to modern works and to the old operas in new settings.

But what about *Berlin*? As strange as it may seem, Berlin so far has closed its opera houses for the summer every year just as the smallest German towns are in the habit of doing, and it has actually been difficult during the tourist season to find anything better than mediocre operettas to attend in Germany's capital. For the first time in its history,



*Here in the gallant age cavaliers, with wigs and graceful swords, led dainty ladies to splendid court functions—View from the portal of Bruchsal Castle, scene of the famous historical chamber music concerts, one of Germany's musical summer attractions*



Berlin will be the home of festival plays in 1929.

And why should it not? True, as an operatic city it does not compare in age with such cities as Vienna, Dresden and Munich; the Muses were well settled in southern Germany—that part of the country closest to Italy, the motherland of grand opera—before they visited the Electorate of Brandenburg. But even so the opera house on Unter den Linden, built by Frederick the Great immediately after his ascendancy to the throne, is close upon two hundred years old, and although an immense new stage has changed its general outward appearance, the facade, designed by Knobelsdorff, is still the same. Now, after a pause of several years, its portals have been thrown open again. The work expended on it during those years has cost many millions, but as a result it can boast of having probably the greatest scenic possibilities of any stage existing. And yet, for all the changes that have been made, the interior is still the same as when Mozart attended, in 1789, a performance of his opera, “The Abduction from the Seraglio” and which Carl Maria Weber made the center of the German operatic world in 1821 with his “Freischuetz.” The next in line was Gasparo Spontini, the great manager of Italian opera and then Meyer-

beer. After that it became more or less a court institution, and came to the fore with much good music, although during the reign of William II. among other things Leoncavallo’s “Roland of Berlin” was also performed. Since the Revolution the opera house on Unter den Linden has been steadily improving in an artistic sense. The list of names connected in this sense with it is imposing: Director Kleiber, the man of “new opera,” Schreker, Janaceks, Alban Bergs, Leo Blech, equally well-known as a conductor of both Wagner and Verdi, and one of the few really great orchestra and stage directors; and last, but not least, the stage director Franz Hoerth. Since the re-building of the Staatsoper (Unter den Linden) every play to be performed there has had to be reset and rehearsed anew. Wagner’s “Mastersingers” and “The Ring of the Nibelung’s” were the first to be thus reshaped, and close upon them followed Mozart’s “Magic Flute” and Verdi’s “Bal Masque,” “Forza del Destino” and “Aida”—all of which will be shown this summer as festival plays in their new setting.

Quite a different aspect is presented by the opera house on the Platz der Republik, known generally as the Kroll-Oper. It was founded by Kroll, who established it firmly as a center of good opera in



*Flute Concert by Frederick the Great—(after Menzel's famous painting) one of the historical scenes to be reenacted in the German capital this summer. The flute concert will be given on the occasion of the opening of the Music Institute for Foreigners in the Golden Gallery of Charlottenburg Castle*





*The historical concerts in the splendid Rococo castle at Bruchsal, near Karlsruhe, are among the most charming attractions of the musical summer season in Germany*





*Munich, Bavaria's art-loving capital, like Dresden and Bayreuth an old Wagner city, reaches the height of opera perfection each year in the presentation, during the summer season, of a number of Wagner and Mozart operas. The Prinzregenten Theater, shown here, is the Wagner shrine*

the nineteenth century by presenting successful operas and filling the roles with well-known singers. Today Berlin's second great opera house is an edifice of noble proportions, built with the aid of one of Berlin's big theatre organizations, the Volksbuehne. Its performances have been conducted since the latter part of 1927 by one of Germany's most able conductors of grand opera—Otto Klemperer, who came from Wiesbaden. He is of the same type as Gustav Mahler, showing the same musical feeling and devotion to precision and style. As example of the best work he has done, one might mention Paul Hindemith's "Cardillac," which was more or less of an experiment; or Stravinsky's operatic oratorio "Oedipus Rex," and an interesting "Don Giovanni" and "Flying Dutchman." Whatever he directs bears his stamp.

Beside these two institutions, the city of Berlin itself conducts grand opera: quite outside the center of the city, in Charlottenburg, stands the Municipal Opera, outwardly and inwardly of imposing dimensions, and not adapted to everything. Bruno Walter is its conductor, one of the greatest

specializing opera conductors of our time. His Mozart is especially charming and of great finesse, and his Verdi is musically and in regard to style of great beauty: he guides the singer without tying him to himself. He has a well-developed gift for discovering singers; as an example one may name Maria Ivoguen, who without doubt owes much to Bruno Walter. *The Staedtische Oper* (Municipal Opera) is, in a way, the popular theatre of Berlin, which, however, does not at all hinder it from achieving the peak of operatic performance. All three opera houses are under the management of one man of exceptional personality, Heinz Tietjen. It is his intention to combine all the resources of Berlin for the coming festival season—especially so in view of a coming artistic "invasion": that of the Scala-ensemble, which expects to visit Berlin this season to present six of its most successful plays. Surveying the entire field, one may safely prophesy that this summer will bring to the fore music exceptional in quality as well as quantity throughout Germany.





## *The German Theater Today*

□ □ □ □ □

**A**NOTHER English word has already incorporated itself into the German vocabulary as a precursor of Berlin's first "season" during the coming Spring. Contrasting with its London prototype, it will be more a time of extraordinary theatrical and musical offerings, than of crowded social events. The "season" in the German capital will be the numerical climax of productions which, as is generally granted, maintain an uncommonly high standard throughout the year. The actual innovation is the concentration within a short period of time, the presentation of German interpretative art through a convex glass, as it were.

The German theater, in common with such institutions on the continent generally, enjoys the patronage of the state which regards budget appropriations for the theater as matter-of-fact expenditures, (in the same category with its schools and museums. Deficits, running into handsome sums, are liquidated annually. Thus art in the opera and theater thrives here. And, commendably enough, the state theaters have not been tied by red-tape into sterile tradition. On the contrary, they often paved the way in which private enterprise then followed. It was in the Prussian State Theater (Staatstheater) in Berlin that Leopold Jessner propagated "expressionism" when that was a new and somewhat awe-inspiring concept.

One of the biggest points of contrast between the American and the German theater is the actual concentration of the one in New York and the decentralization of the other throughout the land. Before its unification Germany was a loose confederation of thirty odd sovereign states, each one of which maintained, as a part of its court, a royal theater of which the ruler was usually the Macenas. Before Bismarck accomplished his Gargantuan task Berlin was little more than a provincial town. But Henry Adams, characterizing Berlin in 1858,

writes in his "Education": "the German theater, on the other hand, was excellent, and the German opera, with the ballet, was almost worth a journey to Berlin."

In the absence of a single dominating center, as New York of the United States, two scores of capital cities of German duchies, principalities, kingdoms and Free States grew to be important and independent cultural and oftentimes commercial centers. The unification of Germany and the choice of Berlin as the capital of the then formed empire scarcely noticeably lessened the influence of the numerous provincial capitals although it did eventually quadruple Berlin's prominence. Similarly, following the Revolution and the republicanizing of Germany, the various state governments nationalized the former court theater and assumed the role of the dethroned royalty as supporting patrons.

The absence here of the extreme individualism and commercial rivalry, as it is practiced in New York theatrical enterprise, reverts to the advantage not only of the population, but also to the theatrical producers themselves. A fruitful instance of this is the Reibaro Concern—a combine of the Reinhardt, the Barnowsky and the Robert theaters for the purpose of club subscriptions to all three theaters.

Another institution, unknown in American life, and of prime importance here is the "Volksbuehne," a People's Theater Guild whose members are largely wage-earners who otherwise would be unable to attend the theater because of the prohibitive price of tickets. In Berlin the "Volksbuehne" has 101,000 members who enjoy subscription rights to their own theater, Theater am Buelowplatz, one of the largest and handsomest theaters in Berlin, and to the Staatsoper am Platz der Republik, one of the three opera houses in Berlin under the jurisdiction of the Prussian



Ministry of Education. A single scale of prices prevails for members of the "Volksbuehne", the seats being distributed by a system of lottery. Forty-two cents purchases the right to "pick" a ticket in the Buelowplatz theater; the opera tickets cost twelve cents more. In both houses exemplary drama and music are played. The German wage-earner, then is not persuaded to seek recreation and enlightenment in the "movies" alone. Indeed, the price of a cinema entrance ticket is frequently higher than that of the "Volksbuehne" subscription tickets. And the "Volksbuehne" itself is thus assured of a large, permanent albeit modestly-paying audience. The classics, including Shakespeare, and modern drama are produced in the Buelowplatz theater.

Among the private theaters in Berlin the three houses under Max Reinhardt have won the greatest repute within and beyond the borders of Germany. One of these, the Deutsche Theater, in the Schumann Strasse, achieved epochal productions in the history of German dramatic art, under the directing genius of l'Arronge, Brahm and Reinhardt successively. The state, recognizing the cultural value of Reinhardt's attainments rewarded him by placing his theaters—the seductively comfortable "Kammerspiele" and the charming little "Komodie" in addition to the parent "Deutsche Theater"—on the tax-exempt list.

Berlin, with upwards of four million inhabitants, has forty-two theaters including the musical comedy and the revue houses—a number regarded here as adequate for the entertainment of the permanent and floating population. In addition to Reinhardt and Jessner there are numerous younger directors—Gustav Hartung, Erich Engel who has achieved signal success in mounting the German version of the "Beggar's Opera"; Karl Heinz Martin, Heinz Hilpert, Juergen Fehling and Erwin Piscator who rose to fame and notoriety through his radical political and dramatic theories.

Among the actors whose names are household by-words are the comedian Max Pallenberg and his wife, Fritzi Massary, whose popularity as a musical comedy star is second only to her position as a favorite in Berlin society; Albert Bassermann, one of the leading actors of the older generation; Alexander Moissi, known to New York for his impersonation of Tolstoi's "Living Corpse"; Werner Krauss, another member of Reinhardt's troupe, whom America has learnt to prize by acquaintance with him on the silver screen; Kaethe Dorsch and Elisabeth Bergner who, although of an entirely different genre, are Berlin's beloved Ethel Barrymore and Maud Adams; Fritz Kortner, Eugen Kloepper, Paul Wegner and Rudolf Kayssler.

But Berlin is not Germany. . . . True, this constellation of stars, after absolving engagements in Berlin over a period of several months, subsequently appears in other parts of the country. But these tours have nothing of the character of the American "road company." The particular star in question is usually invited to create a role different from that of his Berlin engagement, and he is billed as a "guest-player" among the other regular actors of the permanent repertoire ensemble of the theatre. The writer has had occasion to visit theatres in many parts of Germany and most always came away with the overwhelming consciousness of the special virtues of each particular company. Especially impressive is the varied and widespread culture throughout the country and the integral part of the theatre plays in maintaining this development.

There is, for instance, the city of Hamburg. As the largest of the Hanseatic Free Cities, Hamburg's supremacy rested on its commercial importance. But it never was just a trading post. It has a worthy theatrical tradition, extending back more than two centuries. Lessing attempted to establish a German National Theatre there about 150 years ago. Today the municipal opera house and two private theatres, "Deutsches Schauspielhaus" and the "Thalia Theater" where especially the drama is presented, are generally considered the home of the best productions in Hamburg.

Everyone who has visited Germany has included Munich in his tour, because of the fame of its charm. With less than a million inhabitants, it has maintained a cultural level that is as remarkable as its differentiation from that of other cities of Germany. There are no disturbing incongruities in Munich—the architecture is as good as the beer, and the theatre is almost as excellent as both of these. Something of the warmth of the Italian sun, which is dissipated long before it reaches Berlin, gives Munich and its inhabitants their intranslatable "Gemuetlichkeit."

To list the German cities with good theatres would necessitate a reprint of Baedeker, and there would be an inevitable monotony in the frequent repetition of a group of asterisks as the evaluation of quality. But the sameness would be confined to this symbol of quality only. Dresden, for instance, is as different from its neighboring Leipzig as it is from Cologne on the Rhine. Dresden, the capital city of Saxony, a city of cottages and gardens is situated, according to the modern Berliner, "in the provinces." Yet its opera, with the famous Fritz Busch, its superior orchestra, its prominent soloists, has been ranked qualitatively higher than even the Viennese and Berlin operas. And its new State Theatre, erected shortly before the war, is





*The Renaissance held sway in Hildesheim after the Gothic had died. A style, the designs of which followed more the desire to create artistic patterns than the urge of building for necessity, produced, among many other pieces of architecture and sculpture, this bay-window of the Templerhaus on the Market Place, probably during the fourth quarter of the 16th Century*





*Dying Gothic's last chord in highest transcendence — the Knochenhaueramtshaus (Butchers' Guild Hall) in Hildesheim, celebrates its 400th birthday this summer*





*There are parts of old Hildesheim which seem to have been made to serve as a background for the legend of the city's thousand-year-old rose bush that today blossoms over the Aspa of the city's venerable cathedral. A section of the old town along the Innerste*



conceded to be the most completely equipped modern stage in this country of technical progress and perfection; and its dramatic performances are generally judged worthy of their stage.

Leipzig, the other metropolis of Saxony, is an extraordinarily interesting combination of mercantile, musical and professorial fame. Johann Sebastian Bach, and then later, Nikisch linked their names with this city, internationally famous for its annual trade fair and as the center of the German book publishing industry. Leipzig's theatre is marked for its enterprising spirit—it manages to secure the rights for first production of new works prior to their staging elsewhere in Germany.

But two hours from Leipzig is Weimar, coupled inseparably with Goethe's name and fame. None less than Goethe himself directed the ducal theatre over a period of twenty-six years. Goethe resigned his post because one of the plays called for the appearance of a dog, and the poet-director was of the opinion that the theatre offered a stage for humans but not for canines. But the Duke begged to differ. Today the Weimar Theatre is quite modern and less finicky. In addition, the Weimar Theatre offered a setting to a climax in recent German history: the constitution of the German republic was signed within its walls.

Goethe's birthplace, Frankfort-am-Main, has won its way into the tours of travelers by the resplendence of its modern architecture, particularly of the state theatre and opera houses, and the picturesqueness and quaintness of its historic quarter.

Stuttgart, associated with Schiller's name, is today the German city where something analogous to the American boom is taking place. It is gaining industrial importance as the center of a new metal industry but it is not forgetting, in the process, intellectual pursuits. As far as the theatre specifically is concerned, Stuttgart boasts two magnificent edifices with probably the most beautiful theatre facades in all Germany. Their interiors are correspondingly gorgeous. And, no less important, serious and genuinely artistic work is achieved on the stage.

Mannheim is another city where the theatre is "understood" and the population has a sterling passion for solid achievement. Schiller's "Raeuber" was first produced here, in the old National Theater, built 150 years ago. This building has not been mummified into a museum; it remains the scene of Mannheim's love of the drama and its present director, Sioli, has been equal to the task of maintaining a standard compatible with its lofty past.

The stages, with their memories and prognosis, that beckon are countless. Duesseldorf brings Heine and his friend, the poet and theatrical direc-

tor Immermann to mind. The dramatist Grabbe, the German Francois Villon, contributed to the theater here, and the local Art Academy added its talents to Immermann's and painted his stage settings; and Felix Mendelsohn was the conductor of his orchestra. Today the city, highly industrialized, has not relinquished its artistic tradition, especially in the drama. In this field it is superior to Cologne, somewhat of a twin city, which appears to concentrate its endeavors to the opera.

An antithesis to these old cities with rooted artistic traditions are the brand-new towns in the Rhine-Westphalian district, flourishing industrial centers, where a decade or two ago there was nothing or just small, unpromising beginnings and today there are Essen, Dortmund, Krefeld and Munich-Gladbach. The iron and coal industries fathered these cities and gave them their patterns. And theaters came into being there because the dwellers wanted them, because they felt a need for the theater and not just because theater buildings and history were their heritage. Each of these cities has a municipally subsidized theater.

The most striking achievement is that of Bochum, a commonplace industrial center with nothing alluring about it at all. Yet it has been able to attract the outside world to make a path to its doors because of the excellence and unique quality of its festival plays during the last two years—a Shakespeare fortnight during 1927 and a Goethe cycle during 1928. The head of the combined Bochum-Duisburg municipal theaters, Dr. Saladin Schmidt, has won for himself the almost unlimited financial support of the Rhineland industrialists. He himself has given proof of an unusual talent for organization and boundless energy and ambition. The Bochum-Duisburg theaters are equipped with the newest technical aids to stage-craft and disposes over-abundant and luxurious "properties." In common with all these new industrial centers, the "Volksbuehne" in Bochum is a flourishing institution and serves, chiefly, the proletariat who thereby gives convincing evidence of his passionate interest in the theatre—in good theatre, to boot.

The festival plays, an honorable German institution, are, indeed, the forerunner of Berlin's modern "season." In 1930 the famous Oberammergau "Passion Play" will make its decennial appearance again. Salzburg, in Austria, just across the German border, has become the Mecca of tourists who want to witness the cream of Reinhardt's productions. Then there is the summer "season" in Godesberg-on-the-Rhine, in Thale in the Harz hills, and in the Heidelberg Schloss, the last mentioned under the direction of Hartung. The list is far from being exhausted, for, without exaggeration, all the by-paths in Germany lead to the theater.





Photo by A. Steiner, St. Moritz

*A bewildering variety of alpine blossoms are messengers of spring in the scenic Lötschen Valley, where customs and costumes are centuries old*





Photo by E. Cyher, Adelboden

*While patches of snow still linger here and there, the dainty crocus makes its appearance in profusion on the pastures of Adelboden in the Bernese Oberland, Switzerland*





*The fragrance of flowering fruit trees permeates the air at Lausanne on Lake Geneva*





*Clear as crystal, the mountain lakes of the Bavarian Alps mirror the glory of the mighty peaks that rise above the clouds into the eternal snow and ice. The Koenigs-See has been glorified by famous painters since times immemorial. Were it not named the "King of Lakes" its majestic grandeur would easily make it the crowning glory of all Alpine lakes*





Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art

From the painting "Harp of the Winds" by Horner Martin

## With April Winds

*I sit and dream across a space of hours  
Nor note the passing of the moment's wing,  
For time seems but the voice of gentle showers,  
A far-off echo faintly murmuring.*

*I sit and dream . . . and as sweet April ways  
The turf turns golden in a sweep of bloom,  
Each branch takes on the tint of chrysoprase  
Where Spring reveals the wonder of her loom.*

*And in an instant all the world slips by  
With time and space out-stript in long ago;  
About my feet the meadow-grasses lie  
Rocked by a wind that makes the blossoms grow.*

*While in the grasses every bloom I see  
Harbors the dew of immortality.*

THOMAS S. JONES, JR.





Photo by Ruedi, Lugano

*Lugano in southern Switzerland, is a spot of enchantment. Its sunshine, and remarkable flora have given it the name of "Switzerland's Florida"*

## *Quaint Customs and Festivities Herald the Advent of Lent and Spring in Switzerland*

□ □ □ □ □

THE passing of Winter and arrival of Spring has since times immemorial evoked feelings of happy anticipation and gladness in the human heart. However, in primitive days Mother Earth's glorious awakening after her long repose during winter was not solely attributed to the natural laws of Nature, but also to the magic work of unseen spirits. From that period of limited enlightenment date consequently some of the oldest Pre-Lenten celebrations one finds in Switzerland. Bonfires here and there on hills and mountains in the central regions of the country still announce the approach of Spring either on the first or the third Sunday in Lent and the distinguished historian Renward Cysat of Lucerne relates about an

ancient custom which decreed that three dances around the Pre-Lenten bonfire had to be danced by the highest members of the Town Council and the foremost maidens of the community. Winter was regarded as an evil which had to be endured and upon the first signs of Spring, its passing was celebrated with ceremonies and parades.

Thus, Littau, a community near Lucerne, observed the custom of chasing "the wild man," representing winter, up to the end of the 19th century. A man of unusually large stature, attired in a costume of wide knickers, ample jacket and moss-covered hat, assumed the rôle of winter and green clad riflemen pursued him with considerable shouting and noise through fields and forests. This



wild chase was meant to symbolize the first storm of Spring. The wild man was subdued in due course and his captors and the remaining populace of the village then paraded him around with much jeering.

Winter, represented by a wooden figure generously covered with cotton wool and stuffed with firecrackers, plays the leading part in an ancient spring festival which is observed yearly in April in the city of Zurich. A parade of over 1,000 school children, dressed either in white or in colorful national costumes, accompanies an effigy of winter, described in this instance as "Bögg," to a large square where the final ceremony of his passing takes place in the evening. Beautiful floats, which include one bearing the Goddess of Spring, are an artistic feature of this procession, and a parade by members of the various guilds, garbed in historical costumes is another colorful attraction in the afternoon.

As the clocks strike the hour of six Bögg is set on fire and while he is expiating his wrongdoings other bonfires flare up on the surrounding mountain heights. A Venetian night festival and jolly social activities conclude this charming festive day which

is known as Sechseläuten — six o'clock ringing feast.

In the lofty Engadine, where winter generally tarries considerably longer than in the lowlands, Spring is nevertheless welcomed as early as March 1st. The "Chalanda Marz" festival dates back to the days when this part of Switzerland was under Roman dominion and pictures in rustic manner the doom of winter and the approach of the dairyman's departure for loftier mountain realms. It is chiefly the day of youth. Boys equipped with cowbells of varied size parade their native village from early morning. At the head and the end of the procession march the leaders, one dressed as a Swiss cowkeeper, with a milking pail not missing, the other as a herdsman, equipped with a long stick and pretending to be looking out for his cows. The songs, yodels and recitations of these youthful celebrants are invariably rewarded with gifts appropriate for the banquet which follows toward evening, with the girls being guests of honor.

Locarno in Southern Switzerland celebrates Blossom time with a gorgeous Camellia and



Photo by A. Kern, Lausanne

*A star-light narcissus field at Les Avants above Montreux, Switzerland, with the Dent Du Midi beckoning in the background*



Mimosa Festival in April. Montreux expresses its joy over flora's bounties in an elaborate Narcissus Festival beginning in June and Geneva offers a wondrous Flower and Music Festival during the same month.

Throughout Switzerland the sedate period of Lent is preceded by some of the quaintest and jolliest celebrations and carnivals which one may find in the Old World. Take, for instance, the Fritschi Parade at Lucerne. It is reminiscent of early medieval days. War clouds had obscured the horizon of this town, which had been known as one of the merriest in existence. Diversions now were few and far between and the citizen's outlook on life was dull and drab. In those uninteresting times a certain Fridli an der Halden, generally known as "Brother Fritschi," came to the fore, and his amusing sayings and clever pranks soon became a general topic.

After his participation in the Burgundian wars, Fritschi's fame as a humorist spread throughout the land. Invitations poured in from everywhere and more than once some would-be host simply seized and carried Fritschi off by force. These incidents greatly pleased the people of Lucerne who

thus were afforded an opportunity to organize a mock expedition to free their popular fellow-citizen from the gentle restraint to which he was subjected. Once the humorist had been carried off to Basle and several hundred burghers of Lucerne, accompanied by the burgomaster and some councillors, marched to that city. They were welcomed by a reception committee attired in martial uniform and Fritschi waved a greeting from a window of one of the leading patrician residences. The mock warriors from Lucerne then spent several festive days at Basle.

Upon his return to Lucerne, Fritschi inaugurated a celebration whose main feature was a parade of men and boys in armor. This procession was held on the last day of the Pre-Lenten Carnival and with the addition of several historical scenes it still is today a noteworthy yearly event on the Thursday preceding Lent.

Basle, the ancient city on the Rhine, whose intellectual attainments, commerce, wealth and philanthropic institutions are known far beyond the Swiss frontier, makes merry yearly for two days during Lent.

The celebration starts at four o'clock in the morn-



Photo by Emil Goetz, Lucerne

*Shrubs and trees in their array of spring make a particularly delightful setting for Tell's Chapel on the lake of Lucerne, Switzerland*





Photo by Steinemann, Locarno

*Camellias, rhododendrons, azaleas, fuchsias, magnolias, oranges, lemons, clematis, roses, wistaria and a multitude of other lovely flowers help to make Ronco near Locarno in southern Switzerland, a veritable bower of blossoms*

ing when the different groups begin their first procession through the streets of Old Basle. Artistically painted and duly illuminated "transparent" posters are a particular feature, for they dwell in clever manner on some of the most important of the year's happenings—chiefly political. In this preliminary march the participants do not wear the costumes they display during the afternoon parade, but some dating back to previous carnivals. Inns and restaurants are duly prepared to receive these early paraders and soup and onion cake are obligatory delicacies served on this particular morning. After 7 A. M. these merry-makers are generally seen at their usual daily occupation, but at 2 P. M. the real festivities begin.

The men of Basle are particularly proud of their reputation as splendid drummers and the afternoon's parade is thus duly enlivened by the many drummers which are a feature of each organization.

In the evening social gatherings and balls arranged throughout the city are hilariously interrupted by the different parading groups which with recitations and pictures again review in comical vein some of the past year's major events.

The next day belongs to the children, and processions in costume and balls gladden the hearts of young Basle during those all too swiftly fleeting hours.

The advent of Easter also calls for certain quaint usages in different parts of the country. Of these customs the so-called "Eierauflesen," the gathering up of eggs, is one of the best known. It is of Alemannic origin and consists of a competition between two parties of which one has to throw a certain number of eggs into a peculiarly shaped flat basket, while the other party has to cover a given distance on foot or on horseback. The man who has accomplished his task first is the winner, and the loser has to pay for the eggs.

Pretty children's festivals here and there express gladness over the mature beauty of Spring in the month of May and another joyous event is the Alpaufzug, the departure of the festively arrayed dairymen and cattle for loftier alpine regions where crocuses, anemones, gentians, narcissi and a host of other dainty blossoms are holding a pageant of colorful splendor.





## *Erik XIV — Queen Elizabeth's Swedish Suitor*

□ □ □ □ □

THE Renaissance gave to the Latin countries a number of colorful personalities: esthetic, brave, romantic and tyrannical. From the meager ground of Sweden there sprang but one full-fledged representative of this era which strangely mixed a refined love for every artistic manifestation with barbaric cruelty in politics and warfare. He has gone down in the world history chiefly as a suitor of Queen Elizabeth.

Erik XIV, born in 1533, was the son of King Gustaf Vasa, called "the Father of his Country" because he had liberated Sweden from the rule of the Danes. By intense labors, unswerving patriotism, persistence, and shrewdness he had built up a monarchy of strategic importance, real national wealth and independent policies. Erik's mother was the German Princess, Katherine of Saxe-Lauenburg, a delicate and melancholy woman, whose introspective mind grew weaker through the years, at last causing her marriage to be dissolved.

From his father Erik inherited an autocratic view of governmental matters, a prowess in military affairs, an intense devotion to his country, and an unquenchable personal pride. His mother's gifts consisted in an appreciation of art, poetry and music, and a desire to dream and philosophize, but also in a melancholia which evidenced itself in sudden fits of jealousy, hatred and suspicion and which ultimately broke his health and dimmed his reason.

At his coronation in 1560 in the ancient city of Upsala, Erik manifested strikingly all the characteristics of a young self-willed ruler of his time. Forsaking the modesty, economy and plainness which had marked the state affairs when his father presided over them, Erik crowded the elaborate ceremony with details of such sumptuousness and exotic splendor as to startle even the representatives of foreign and richer countries.

This love for color and beauty, for music, festive repasts and gorgeous costumes, so common with

all Renaissance monarchs, ran as an undertone all through his life, and his passion for ruling, for commanding, for demonstrating to the world his inalienable might and power as sovereign of a strong and fearless country showed in his generous distribution of orders and titles, his dispatching of ministers and ambassadors to the most remote corners of the globe.

It is therefore fully in keeping with his towering pride, which admitted no obstacles, that he determined to win the hand of no less a ruler than Queen Elizabeth of England. Her majesty received many both strange and flattering supplications, but hardly one which was repeated with as devoted and dogged a persistence as Erik's.

He had for years desired to make a visit to England, accompanied by a large retinue, in order to duly impress the Queen, but the will of his father had barred any such attempts. In lieu of a tête-à-tête with Elizabeth, Erik dispatched to London—and maintained there—a personal representative to plead his cause, a Frenchman by name Dionysius Beurereus, who had previously been his tutor. But not satisfied with the slow progress made by this gentleman, Erik at last obtained the permission of his father to send his younger half-brother, Prince Johan, born in Gustaf's second marriage with a Swedish noblewoman, Margaretha Leijonhuvud.

Johan was courteously received by the Queen, who, however, told him that she could not possibly decide so important a matter without having seen her suitor. But when the Prince assured her that Erik would be overjoyed to make the trip to England, the Queen dismissed the suggestion and led the conversation into other channels. She even wrote a letter to King Gustaf, a gracious missive composed in faultless Latin, asking him to dissuade his son from any journey to the British Isles. Gustaf showed Erik the letter, with a paternal attitude of "I told you so," but the love sick young





*A Tragic Mediaeval Drama of Swedish Royalty—King Erik XIV, deprived of his crown and thrown into prison at Gripsholm Castle, is cheered by his wife, Karin Maansdotter*



man rudely told his father that he could not read Latin, or else he would have gleaned the subtle and tender meaning of the words. These unfair aspersions cast on the King's knowledge of Latin—which was admittedly considerable—did not in the least further Erik's cause. He remained, however, undaunted. He continued to beg and plead, and on the very eve of his father's death, received the King's permission to sail. But the journey never came off, because news of Gustaf's demise reached him before he had set out on his voyage, and he was forced to return to Stockholm.

Highness has always showed me, I would badly express what I feel. For this your sincerity of feeling, I therefore offer you in return a friendship so real and great that more can not be asked of a royal person." But twice more, Erik set out with England and the Queen's hand as goal. Once a terrific storm rose, tossing the royal vessel unmercifully, and Erik, badly troubled by seasickness, ordered the ship to return to port. The other time, when he tried to make his way to Britain via Denmark, the Danish King barred his way.

Although he must have known the futility of his



*Gripsholm Castle on the southern shore of the Lake Malaren, started by Gustaf Vasa in 1537. Now a national picture gallery*

Unable to proceed himself, Erik now entrusted to his chancellor, Nils Gyllenstierna, the precarious business of approaching Elizabeth again. He also sent a special messenger with a letter to the Queen; an ardent, humble and begging dispatch in which he reminded the sovereign of his steadfast love and of "the many troubles I have had to endure for your sake," ending by drawing a sad picture of the Queen as a possible old maid.

All his efforts were, however, to no avail. Elizabeth answered: "If I did not acknowledge the debt I owe Your Highness for the graciousness Your

ardor, he persisted in showering the Queen with burning love notes and costly gifts, until he at last turned his attention elsewhere.

His final choice showed the startling capriciousness of his Renaissance mind. From courting England's Queen, he let his devotion suddenly carry him into a wholly different stratum of social life: the woman he elected to become his spouse was the daughter of a lowly Swedish soldier and prison guard. Contemporary descriptions and pictures of her prove, however, that young Karin Maansdotter, had beauty and great personal charm. She was tall,





*King Gustaf Vasa, called by the Swedes "The Father of His Country", because he liberated it from the Danes. This painting of King Erik XIV's father was made in 1542*



blond and of a fine figure and her love for Erik was as steadfast as it was unselfish.

From the time that she, at the age of sixteen, bore him his first child, until his tragic end, her affection and loyalty remained unshaken. Whenever fear, suspicion and murky thoughts beset the temperamental King, there was always Karin's tender hand, compassioned look, and soft, understanding word to dispel the gloom.

It was to her that he clung in child-like desperation when warfare, intrigue and dangerous rifts between him and his brothers threatened his rule. The first serious break, doomed to have fatal con-

hold erected by Gustaf Vasa. Here Johan and Katherine were kept for many years.

In 1563 a heavy war cloud rolled over the horizon. Unable to bear the disgrace and defeat they had sustained from the hands of Gustaf, the Danes entered into a compact with the free Hanseatic city of Luebeck, in Germany, a rich and important power, and attacked with men and ships. The war lasted seven years, ending with the peace in Stettin in 1570, at which Sweden was forced to pay Denmark a large sum of money.

But although Sweden was now at peace with foreign nations, Erik could not find rest and quiet.



*Decorative portal at Kalmar Castle where King Erik XIV often lived*

sequences, occurred when he and Johan became open enemies in connection with Sweden's annexation plans in Estonia and Latvia. Prince Johan, then Duke of Finland, had married Katherine of Poland, sister to the Polish King. He even lent money to his wife's brother, and because of the hostility existing at the time between Sweden and Poland, Erik decided that Johan had acted as a traitor. He sent an expedition to Finland, brought the enraged Duke back, and threw him and his wife into prison at the Castle of Gripsholm, not far from Stockholm, a stately Mediæval strong-

His troubled mind conjured up innumerable problems—mostly non-existing—and his suspicions became a fixed idea. And whereas Karin was always by his side, trying to smooth the worried wrinkles of his brow, there was another force at work, a vicious, scheming character, who knew how to capitalize his monarch's short-comings. He was Goeran Persson, the son of an obscure priest. By subtle means, he fanned Erik's fears and superstitions for the sole purpose of furthering his own position as confidential adviser.

He managed to estrange the King from his rela-





*The "Astral Chamber" of the Gripsholm Castle, started by Gustaf Vasa in 1537*



*King Erik's chamber at Kalmar Castle where the unfortunate monarch frequently resided*



tives and it was directly due to the poison which Persson instilled in the monarch's mind, that Erik personally committed an atrocious crime. Believing implicitly a weird story which Persson told him of an insurrection on the part of certain members of the Swedish noble family, Sture, the King not only ordered the suspects killed, but actually murdered one of them, Nils Sture, himself. Bursting into the cell in Upsala prison where the young nobleman was detained at the word of the treacherous Goeran Persson, Erik stabbed the unsuspecting Sture with a dagger, penetrating his arm. Although badly wounded, the gallant Nils removed the weapon, kissed the stained and dripping blade, and handed it back to his King with a gracious remark. But even this heroic defiance of pain and danger did not save him, and with the help of a group of soldiers who had accompanied him, Erik had soon put Sture to death.

Immediately upon this dastardly act came a period of wordless grief, stricken conscience, and haunting images to the monarch. He actually fled from the city, hiding in the neighboring woods for several days, and it was only Karin who managed to bring him back to a semblance of his former normal self. He now turned about, in every way trying to undo the pain, worry and enmity he had created on so many sides. His first act was to release his brother Johan and his sister-in-law Katherine, and a moving reconciliation, recorded in detail in his diary, was held between the three.

But though Erik believed that he might continue his rule as heretofore, a wave of opposition was gradually rising in the country against his arbitrary methods, his fickleness, his suspicion, and unwarranted cruelty. Prince Johan naturally became the spokesman and leader of the insurgents, and finally, in January, 1569, the national parliament was assembled in Stockholm and the representatives of the Swedish people decided that they had suffered long enough under the unprincipled reign of a half-crazed monarch, and declared that he had forfeited the crown. It is strange and significant to note that Erik is supposed to have said at this very time, when talking to his brother Johan: "I have only been crazy once in my life and that was when I set you free."

The tables were now turned: Erik, who before had imprisoned Johan in Gripsholm Castle, yielding to a fit of high-handed and narrow chauvinism, now became the prisoner himself, at the hands of his own brother. The latter still suffered from the injustice and pain he and his wife had been forced to endure, and as a revenge he ordered several of the noblemen who were particularly hateful towards Erik to act as his keepers. The curtain had descended upon the rule of Gustaf Vasa's oldest son, a brief reign, spectacular in the

beginning, promising at first, but always shadowed by the dull premonition of coming disaster. Much of what his father had carefully built up had been wrecked in the bargain, men and money had been squandered, and in a damp and gloomy prison cell the dethroned king of Sweden contemplated the failure of his life.

But every ray of hope had not left him: there still remained his wife, Karin, who kept as close to his side as the rigid prison rules and the caprices of Erik's keepers permitted her. It was to her he turned, as he had all through his married life, pouring his troubled words into her ear, explaining his acts, which he, despite all criticism, found honorable and justified.

Long and dull were the hours, days, months that Erik wandered the brief steps from wall to wall in his narrow confinement, and when at last Prince Johan, to make his brother's cup run over with anguish and grief, forbade Karin to visit him, Erik turned to writing. Much of what he jotted down in the uncertain light of the high prison window is preserved, and even in the twilight of his reason there still persists the pride, the certainty of purpose and the strange sense of surprise of one who has been totally misunderstood.

But not even the satisfaction of putting his words on paper was permitted Erik. His keepers, in want of other punitive measures, deprived him of ink and paper. A flicker of persistence and defiance lived, however, in the groping, muddled mind of the former king, and he soon devised a means of printing his sentences on the white-washed walls of his cell with a splinter of wood, charred and dipped in water. He also drew weird pictures of human figures, and his indescribable longing for his wife made his fingers fashion the images of women, fantastic, idolized and unreal.

In 1577 Erik was transferred to the castle of Oerbyhus, where once again a keeper was allotted him who mingled bestial cruelty with personal hatred towards the unfortunate prisoner. And it was here, on February 25, that Erik died. Much has been written about the cause of his death, whether it was natural or not. The belief persists, however, that he was served poison in a plate of pea soup, and it is not improbable that his brother, who later became king of Sweden under the name of Johan III gave the order to put Erik out of the way.

His very death, mysterious and unexplained, is somehow a fitting seal on a career which in every respect bore the imprint of the Renaissance, a career in which right and wrong mingled to a bewildering extent, in which light and shadow chased each other with breath-taking speed, in which glamour and tragedy, luxury and want wove a strange, fantastic, but vividly colorful pattern.





*A pastoral scene in the mountains of Slovakia*

## *Color and Art of Czechoslovak Country Side*

□ □ □ □ □

**F**EW countries can rival in their artistic value and brilliant picturesqueness the costumes of Slavic nations, especially those of Czechoslovakia.

There the peasant costumes are still worn on Sundays as well as week days in many a country community and among Czechs, Moravians, Slovaks and Ruthenians, all of whom are brothers in Slavic origin, they express the individual differences of the countries in about forty distinctive variations, one costume rivaling the other as to richness of color, genuineness of design, and artistic harmony of its hand embroidered parts.

Especially in the mountainous part of the country, the lack of central plane accounts for the development and safeguarding of the local peculiarities which vary even among the villages of the same country, and justify fully the native saying: "Walk over the next hill and you will find a different costume."

Thus a person well acquainted with Czechoslovak national costumes can guess from peasants' attire even the village they come from, as different color ribbons, varying numbers of buttons, different men's and women's headwear and peculiarities of the ornamental design tell the origin.

While in some parts of Bohemia the costumes express a more somber character of the people, like the costumes of the "Chods", whose name derives from "to walk," as they walked guarding the southeastern border of Bohemia for centuries, the peasant communities of the eastern Moravia and those of Slovakia sing out fully the racial love of color and art in their gorgeous peasant attire. Many of the well-known Czechoslovak resorts in Moravia and Slovakia give their visitors an oppor-

tunity to slide quietly out from among their international companions and within an hour to transfer themselves into the middle of old time pageants which far surpass their most daring expectations.

A Sunday is a day to see the Moravian peasant dressed up in all his finery; let us, therefore, leave the delightful resort Luhacovice in Moravia with sun glittering on the morning dew of the meadows and take a short trip into one of the characteristic Moravian villages.

Here it comes as a lovely surprise beyond the curve of the main road, its white, yellow and red houses facing the road, with an outside circle of thatched barns, a fresh patch of colors against a fine green and blue background of the neighboring fields and woods.

The main square with a church in the middle and a frame of invitingly shady trees around has today a holiday appearance. There is no busy farmer "hawing" in or out with his pair of oxen, no children with their flocks of geese to take care of. Behind the small windows full of gay flower pots there is going on a holiday scrubbing of the whole family, followed by mother's laying out the starched white sleeves of men's and women's dress with all the rest of the finery out of the chest in the back room, in whose coolness all the provisions as well as all the clothes of the family are stored.

At last the large ornamented prayerbooks are taken down from the beams below the ceiling where they have been kept through the week in safety with the other printed family heirlooms: bibles, family's records, and old calendars.

In small groups and one by one the picturesque figures emerge from below the archways which form delightful entrances into the farmhouses, in



some of the communities adorned with painted ornaments of flowers, fruit, and birds in bright colors.

Soon the white church is filled with color and is exchanged into a flower garden, as women and girls kneel there in their bright full skirts and rich embroideries. Men and women alike sing harmoniously, overpowering in volume of sound the organ itself.

The service over, we can watch them leaving the church, the bright sunshine enhancing the brilliancy of their costumes. Men light their pipes and cigars and form small groups to discuss

the front pocket of the trousers, and a small dark hat beautified with ribbons, buttons, and often a nose-gay and feathers finish the young men's Sunday costume.

The older men wear white flannel coats, or ones of gray or dark color. Girls chat happily together. They wear their hair in plaits. Many long necklaces of luster beads as well as the little bunches of flowers they carry in their prayerbooks give another expression to their love of color.

The married women cannot enjoy any more the freedom of a plaited hairdress; their heads have to be covered with scarlet Turkish headkerchiefs



*A bride and groom of southeastern Moravia, dressed in their wedding finery*

weather, crops, and recent political events. They are tall, fine looking fellows, with intelligent faces, their dark eyes suggesting their lively temperament.

They wear either yellow leather trousers above high Wellington boots, or long dark blue ones of woolen weave. Their fine white linen shirts with full starched sleeves and embroidery around the neck and cuffs form a good contrast with a short dark waistcoat embroidered with bright-colored braid in ornaments, with three scarlet hearts across its back.

A pair of fine ribbons hanging from its front, a large red-embroidered handkerchief showing in

elaborately arranged in traditional folds or beautiful embroidered caps which often enhance the loveliness of their clear profiles.

Some of them stop in front of the church and offer for a few moments a scene well worthy of an artist's brush. With their white lace aprons or those of scarlet, orange, or pea-green silk covered with roses, their white sleeves adorned with hand embroidery and hand lace which forms also a large collar around their necks, richly beaded and embroidered waistcoats as well as caps, and their ribbons hanging down to the waist, they personify a rich harmonious accord of beauty. Yet they cannot stay long, as the midday dinner is to be





*A future Slovak belle*

prepared, and they have to change into their ordinary clothes.

It is only on Sunday that they prepare a more elaborate meal, the peasant cuisine being simple. Soup, coffee, and all forms of dough represent its most important ingredients. Only Sundays and most important holidays meat is served on the large wooden table in the corner of the room above which hangs a row of pictures of saints painted on glass.

Nevertheless, the cooking is very good and to be invited into a cool fresh room "to have a bite" more than justifies a claim of good luck. Here the old Czech proverb "Guest into the house is God in the house" is still lived up to in its old interpretation and often an offer of money after a hearty meal might cause nothing but hurt feelings.

Of course, there are some particularly good occasions to have ourselves invited to taste peasant dishes and one of the best is country wedding. In these villages where the love for the dress of the fathers did not give way to the modern attack of standardization, matrimony still means a union for the whole life, and a wedding is of common interest of the whole community. Between the elaborate cooking, chatting, dancing and singing, the whole village has a good time, and the old wedding cus-

toms enacted by people in picturesque dress make it a pageant of charm and color.

Beside a wedding and a village dance on a Sunday afternoon and night, there are, though, especially two wonderful opportunities to see Moravian costumes at their best: the regular pilgrimages every Sunday and holiday between June 12 and July 5 to the chapel of St. Antonius near Velka Blatnice, and the nationally known annual pilgrimage to Velehrad, where St. Cyril and St. Methodius first preached Christianity in Moravia.

Thousands and thousands flock every fifth of July to the seven hundred years old church, and the roads are flooded for miles with processions carrying banners and led by bands of wind instruments, forming gorgeous streams of color to which the lines of fruit trees furnish a becoming frame.

However, the Moravian peasant in his weekly apparel as well as weekday state of mind is no less interesting, and the spectacle of horse and cattle market at Uherske Hradiste rivals the spectacular church festivals by its wonderful mixture of pathos and comedy.

It takes place in the Fall, when the fields are clean shaven and offer an open playground to the wind, when the shepherd is tempted to leave his



*A little Slovak boy, with his bonnet of ribbons and lace*





*A trio of young married women, dressed in their Sunday best in front of their village church in Moravia*

sheep to the faithful dog and look for the mushrooms in the underbrush, along the roadside. It is an event of two days.

However, southeastern Moravia is not the only part where one can join in such adventures or partake of the simple country life of ingenuous people. The beautiful high Tatra Mountains in Slovakia with their numerous resorts at deep green lakes four thousand feet high, which quietly slumber at the foot of twice as high masses of rock, hide in their valleys of primeval fir woods villages of unrivaled charm, and actual treasure houses of native creative national art. Slovaks who were under the Hungarian government not allowed to wear their embroidered shirts as an "unfriendly demonstration to the government", have clung to their individual expression of national temperament in art and, therefore, we find in Slovakia the traditional dress as well as old costumes even more jealously guarded than in the western part of the Republic. The famous resorts themselves like Piestany, Trencianské Teplice, Strbské Pleso (Lake) are in the very middle of the picturesque Slovak country side, with charming Slovak villages within walking distance.

A village itself, against the background of the

beautiful high Tatras, proves on a Summer week day very quiet and restful. Its wooden houses with ornamental patterns carved in wood or with brilliant painted borders in two colors around their windows are scattered among the trees on the green banks of a mountain stream which twists through the valley.

In the evening the village wakes up to its full life and charm. Families return from their work in the fields, and after supper a friend may come in and sit down with the old folks and start singing.

Once the singing begins, who can tear himself away, being a Slovak to whom a song is the most natural expression of mood? Their naturally fine voices carry their beautiful songs, full of temperament and again of deep Slavic melancholy, in perfect harmony through the peaceful evening.

It is difficult to leave the picturesque evening "sittings" and their unusual melodies in order to walk back before darkness descends on the whole valley.

The charm of these scenes against the background of the dark mountains melts with the peaceful solemnity of the coming night into a deep accord of the apotheosis of beauty, the love of which so fully penetrates the lives and work of these people.



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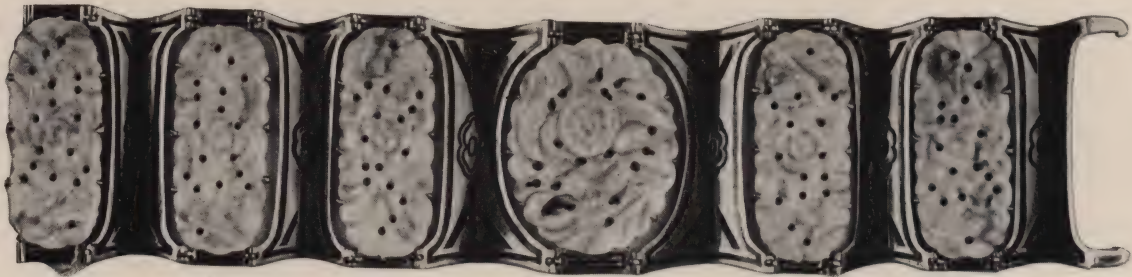


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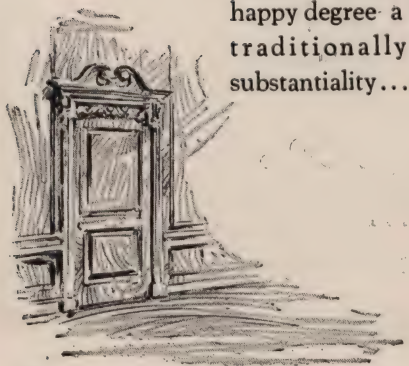
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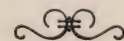
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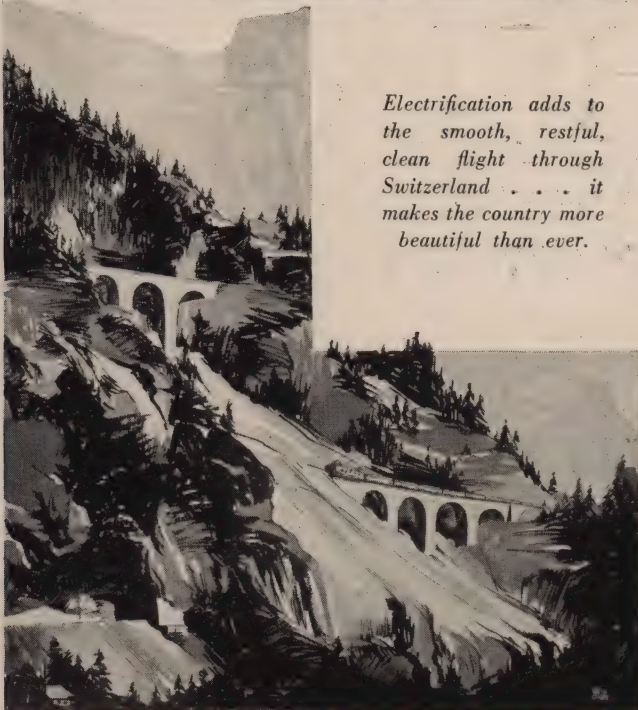
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